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# TIRUKAḺUKUNRAM

## (PAKSHI-TĪRTHAM)

(ILLUSTRATED)

19

PUBLISHED BY

M. M. KUMARASĀMI MUDALIYAR

TRUSTEE, TIRUKALUKUNRAM DĒVASTĀNAM

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# PREFACE

A FEW years after I assumed the Trusteeship of this Dēvastānam, I was prompted by a strong desire to issue a monograph dealing with the temple, to which pilgrims from all parts of India, and many European tourists, resort throughout the year, attracted by the unique daily visit of a pair of eagles, to which great sanctity is attached. With this object in view I spent a long time collecting information from various sources; but for want of a collaborator the work could not be started till the end of 1922, when Mr. P. V. Jagadīsa Ayyar of the Archæological Department applied to me for some particulars in connection with the temple for the revision of the chapter relating it in the second edition of his *South Indian Shrines* which was then in the press. I availed myself of the opportunity to invite him to make a short stay at this place to enable him not only to have the information required but also to help me with my proposed monograph. His stay had to be lengthened into several weeks on account of research work which suggested itself to him in connection with the founder of the temple, the Chōḻa King Suraguru. Besides the mention of this king in the copper plates edited by the Madras Epigraphical Department and in *Kaliṅgattuparani*, a standard work in Tamil literature which eulogises the victory of the Chōḻa King Kulōttuṅga I over the Kaliṅga territory, no other particulars had been available. However, there is a mention of this king

in the *Stalapurāna* of this place, and from time immemorial a drama entitled "Suraguru Nāṭaka" had been enacted annually here, but had been stopped prior to my assuming charge of the trusteeship. Unaware as I then was that this performance was in commemoration of the founder's day, no notice was taken of it by me till my attention was drawn to it by Mr. Jagadīsa Ayyar.

In the course of his patient and laborious study of the antiquities of the place with special reference to the local *Purāna* Mr. Ayyar hit upon a series of sculptures in the carved piers within the temple relating to incidents connected with the coming of king Suraguru to this place from Mahābalipuram close by, which had its own connection with the religious importance of this place. Though this king is assigned to the mythical period by modern historians, according to our *Purāna* he belongs to the early Kali Yuga. Added to this, Mr. Ayyar was also able to suggest, after deep enquiry of the aged residents, that the village of Kottimaṅgalam, a suburb, might have been the place where this king resided (probably from the name *kottavan* in Tamil, meaning king); and certain other spots in that village pointed to the residence of the queens, pleasure-garden, elephant stables, etc. Not being satisfied with the mere mention of these incidents in the booklet, he desired to reproduce them in plates as well, and applied for the services of his friend Mr. C. S. Sundram Ayyar, late of his office, who readily and willingly came forward to undertake the task of preparing them. The result of his labours will be evident from a perusal of the book.

When the manuscript was ready both Rao Bahadur V. Māsilāmani Piḷḷai and Sir P. Rājagopālāchāriyār had the kindness to go through the same. Also Sir P. Rāmanāthan of Ceylon and Dr. J. H. Cousins of the National College, Adyār, who chanced to visit the place, passed the manuscript for the press. To them my thanks are also due.

For the honorary work done by Mr. Jagadīsa Ayyar not only I myself but my successors in office shall ever be grateful.

TIRUKALUKUNRAM DEVASTANAM, *October 19, 1923.* — M. M. KUMARASĀMI MUDALIYĀR, *Trustee.*

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# TIRU-KAL̤U-KUNRAM

OR

# The Hill of the Sacred Eagles

Tiru-kal̤u-kunram is a famous place of pilgrimage in South India, sacred to worshippers of Siva.

**Situation**

It lies nine miles to the south-east of the town of Chingleput, (Fig. 1) and ten miles to the west of Māmallapuram (Fig. 2) (now widely known as 'The Seven Pagodas') along the sea-shore. The *Skānda Purāna* gives the site of Tiru-kal̤u-kunram (Fig. 3) as about a *yōjana* (ten miles) west of Mahōdadi (the Bay of Bengal) and about half a *yōjana* north of the Pālār river, and as comprising an area of five square *yōjanas*, lying in the form of a girdle, the centre of which is the hill where the temple has been consecrated to Vēdagirīsvara. This hill is said to be one of the peaks of Mount Kailāsa which, with two others, was transported to South India aeons ago by the mercy of God. Kāḷahasti in the Chittoor District, and Srisailam in the Kurnool District, claim the two other peaks of Kailāsa among their dearest possessions.

The tract of country in which Tiru-kal̤u-kunram is situated is known in comparatively modern times as a part of Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam, which was one of the main provinces of the Tamil country. Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam was bounded on the north by Kāḷahasti; on

the east by the Bay of Bengal ; on the south by the river Peṇṇār ; and on the west by Tiruvannāmalai.

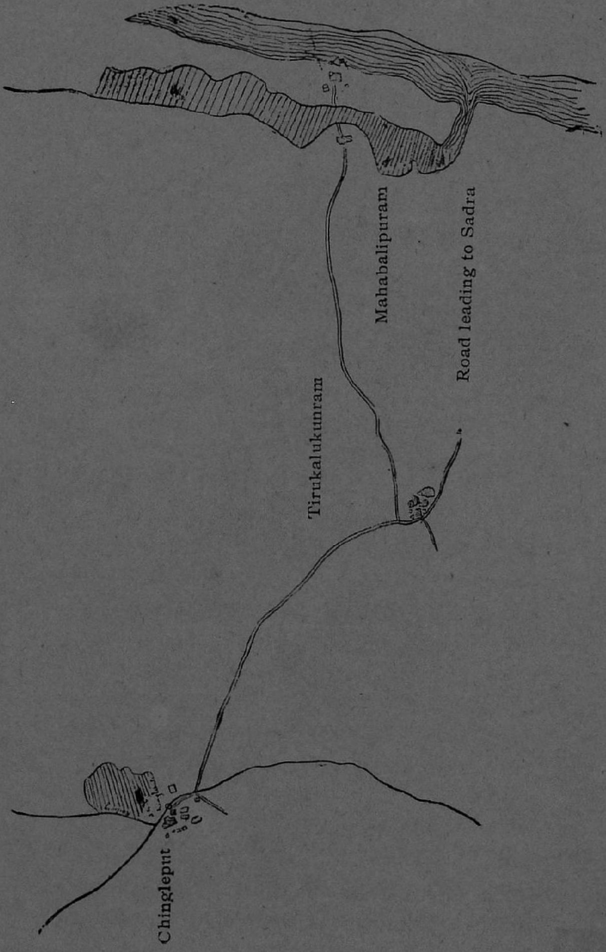


FIG. 1. MAP SHOWING THE ROUTE FROM CHINGLEPUT AND MAHABALIPURAM TO TIRUKALUKUNRAM

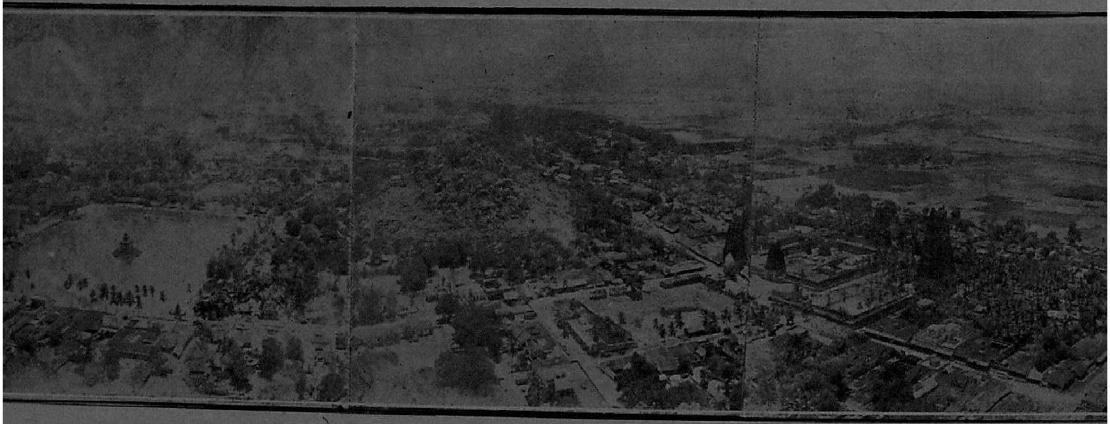

FIG. 3. PANORAMIC VIEW OF THE VILLAGE

It consisted of twenty-four *Kōttams* or divisions,

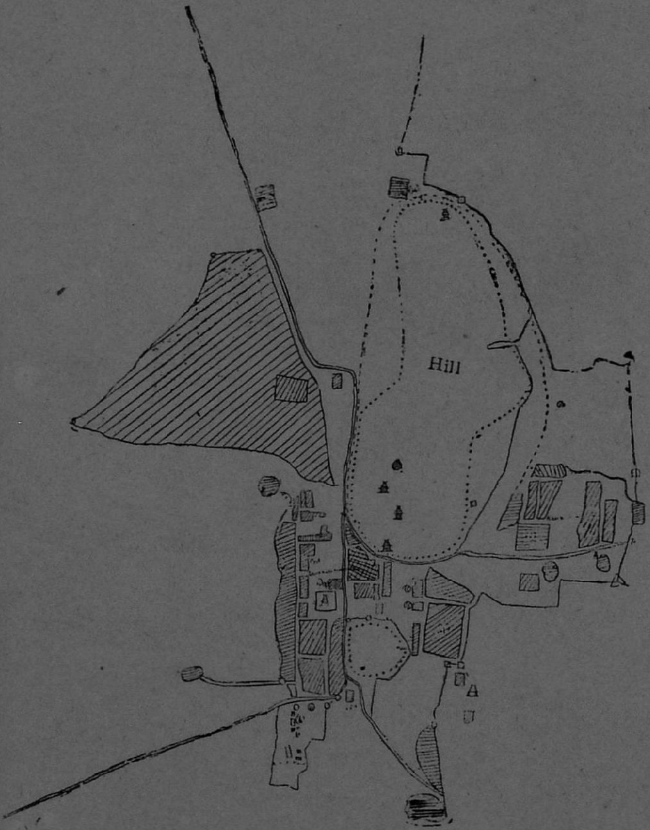


FIG. 2. MAP SHOWING THE LOCATION OF THE HILL IN THE VILLAGE

of which the *Kōttam* in which Tiru-kaḻu-kunram is situated was known as the Kaḷattūr *Kōttam*.

As is usual with most South Indian Temples, Tiru-kal̤u-kunram is known by several other names.

**Other names**

The most popular of these is *Pakshi Tīrtham* after the bird-tank which is on the top of the hill. Near it have alighted, from of old, two eagles of Purānic fame for food and water offered to them by a long line of Vel̤l̤aḷa Paṇḍārams. Another popular name of this holy place is *Rudrakōti*, which also is mentioned in one of the Purānas. A *kōti* (ten millions) of Rudras are said to have worshipped Vēdagirīsvara here. Two other names of Tiru-kal̤u-kunram which have a Purānic history are *Ādinārāyanapuram* and *Vēdagiri*.

**Adinarayana-puram**

The origin of the name *Ādinārāyanapuram* is related thus. Once upon a time, the Dēvas, unable to bear the cruelties of certain Rākshasas (demons), sought the protection of Brahmā. But he could not help them. The assembled Dēvas then appealed to Vishnu for succour. Vishnu invoked Siva for guidance, and was informed that these Rākshasas were great Siva-bakthas (devotees of Siva), and that, so long as they continued to be his ardent devotees, they would remain invincible. Vishnu then resolved to draw their minds away from the worship of Siva. He assumed the form of a Buddha and preached to them the doctrines of Buddhism,[1] and so succeeded in diverting the Rākshasas from their devotion to Siva. Alienated from their former

[1] It must not be supposed that the Buddha mentioned here was Gauthama Buddha of Kapilavasthu, who lived in the fifth century before Jesus Christ, for our ancient books as well as Gauthama Buddha himself, in his teachings contained in Pāli Books, refer to numerous Buddhas in earlier aeons.

faith, their power of achievement left them. The Dēvas were then able to conquer them easily. But as Vishnu had violated the law of righteousness by bringing about the apostacy of the Rākshasas, he had to do works of expiation. For this purpose he chose Tiru-kaḻu-kunram and performed hard penance there. Thenceforth the place came to be called after him *Ādinārāyanapuram*. Even now Vaishnavas worship at the Temple of Tiru-kaḻu-kunram, and there are some Vaishnavas serving as officers in the temple.

There is also a local tradition that four centuries ago a temple dedicated to Vishnu stood at the foot of the hill on the south-western side of it No traces of it, however, are to be found now. At the spot where the Vishnu temple is alleged to have stood, there is only a tank called Thēraḍikuḷam (Tank-next-to-the-car). Sculptures relating to a Vishnu temple are occasionally dug up in places adjacent to the hill, and these attest the previous existence of a Vishnu temple.

**Vedagiri**

The name *Vēdagiri* is also mentioned in the Purānas. It is said that the people of the world who lived in a distant *yuga* (aeon) had—far earlier than the days of Krishna-Dvaipāyana-Vyāsa, the son of Parāsara—become so unspiritual that the recitation of the Vēdas was entirely neglected; that Siva then caused the Vēdas to be divided into four parts and entrusted them to the custody of *Rishis* for preservation in their memory and that of their descendants; that the Vēdic Powers were not content with being treasured by a few and appealed to the

Lord to make them objects of universal acceptance; that Siva gave them a corporeal form, even as

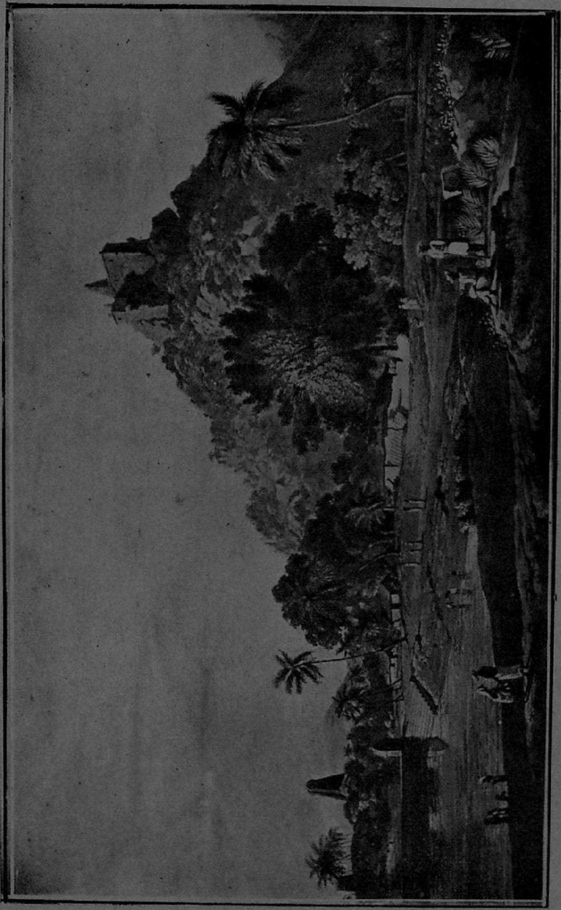

FIG. 4. HILL IN THE VILLAGE
*(Photo from an old Painting kindly lent by Sir Charles Todhunter)*

he gave to millions of souls human forms, and

named it *Vēdagiri*, that is, the Hill called the Vēdas.

The popular tradition is that this range of rocks represents the four Vēdas, each of them being special to a Vēda—the first represents the *Rig Vēda*, the second the *Yajur Vēda*, the third the *Sāma Vēda*, and the fourth the *Atharvana Vēda*, and Siva is on the summit of the last (Fig. 4). The meaning is that the ritual and doctrine taught by the sacred words of the Vēdas are the ladder (*Soupanamārgham*) to God, and that, unless the spirit chooses this path and resolutely travels along it, it will never attain Godliness (*Siva Jñānam* or *Bhrami Sthithi*) but will lose itself in the mazes of worldliness.

It is upon the highest hill of this range that a massive temple has been consecrated to Vēdagirīsvara. Situated in the northern portion of the village, the four successive peaks extend from north to south (Fig. 5) and present the appearance of a concave segment on the western side (Fig. 6). The whole range, especially that portion of it which is known as the Atharvana Peak, abounds in various powerful medicinal herbs. The gentle wind that blows softly across the green-clad sides of the hill carries with it the aroma of these medicinal herbs, and many a despairing pilgrim feels his strength revive and health return. It is no wonder that, at the Sañjīvi Ghat (the north-western extremity of the hill), the circumambulating pilgrims stop to drink in the pure air with joyous countenance, nor is it a matter for astonishment that they stay with delight for more than the prescribed period of a *maṇḍalam* (forty-eight days) in the sacred village.

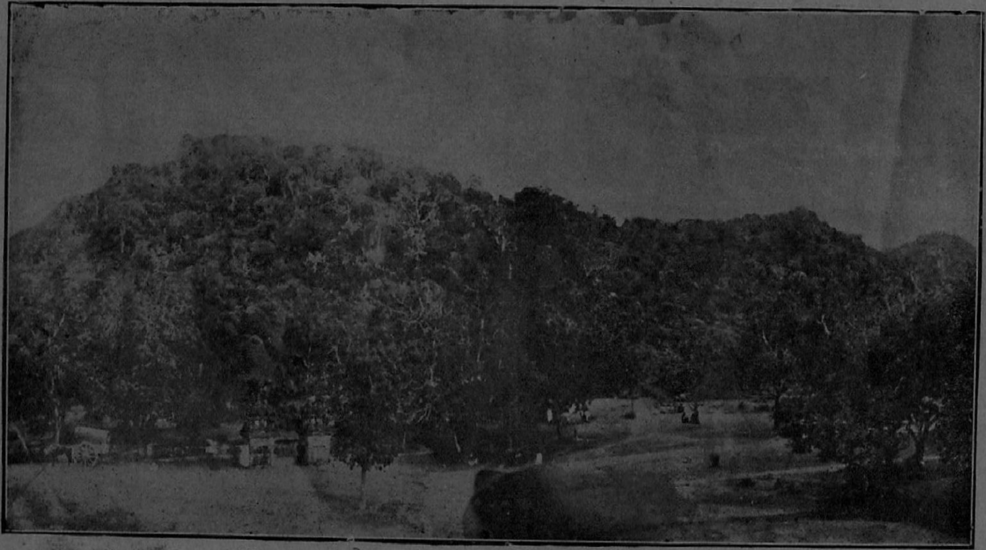

FIG. 5. WEST VIEW OF THE HILL

FIG. 6. FESTIVAL AROUND THE HILL ON THE THIRD DAY OF THE *Brahmotsavam* FESTIVAL
(*From the Photo by Ratna & Co.*)

The hill covers an area of about 264 acres, and the distance covered by the pathway encircling the hill—the *Pradakshina Bāttai*, as it is called—is two miles and two furlongs. Pilgrims go round the hill both at sunrise and sunset. We find that, as early as the year 1766, certain owners of salt-pans in three neighbouring villages made a gift of their income for the maintenance of the pathway, and this gift has contributed, in the course of years, not only to the maintenance of the pathway but also to the temple on the hill (Fig. 7). The starting point for the *Pradakshinam* round the hill is at the southernmost point of the hill, where is to be seen the entrance to the flight of steps leading to the temple on the hill. This entrance is marked by two shrines one of which is dedicated to Chintādri Vināyagar, and the other to Sāsta, i.e., Ayyanār.

After an ascent of about 200 steps from this entrance we meet with two flights of steps, both of which lead to the temple on the hill, one by the right and the other by the left side. People, while going to the temple, mount by the former flight of steps, and, when returning, descend by the latter, in conformity with the Sāstraic injunction that one, while doing the circuit of a temple, ought always to have the Deities on one's right side. About seventy feet below this way is a cavity in the rock about forty feet long, twenty feet broad and forty feet deep, full of water. This mountain pond is known as the *Pakshi Tīrtham*, also called *Sampāthi Tīrtham*. Its water is pure and clear, and possesses medicinal properties. Many are the stories related of the wonderful healing effects of this pond. It is

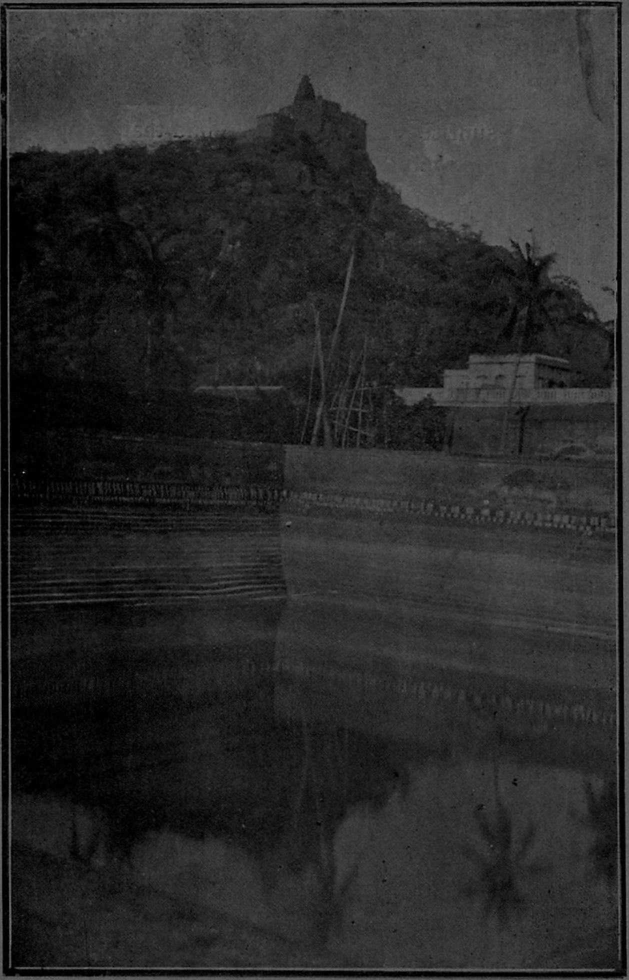

FIG. 7. THE TEMPLE ON THE HILL AND NANDI-TIRTHA TANK WITHIN THE TEMPLE

said that the minister of a king called Suraguru and his dog, both of whom were suffering from incurable leprosy, were instantaneously cured of their malady by a bath therein !! Much of its importance is also due to the fact that it is near this Tīrtham that the sacred eagles are daily fed.

**The visit of the Eagles**

The spectacle of two eagles arriving daily at the place at a particular time, and taking cooked saccharine food and ghee from the hand of a *Pandāram*, (Fig. 8) is indeed wonderful and inspiriting. The two birds look singularly youthful and dignified. Their calmness and gentleness of movement ensure for them an easy distinction from the rest of their kind. They are white in colour with beaks tinged with a little yellow. The great sanctity attributed to them is due to the tradition that these eagles were once Rishis and that their metamorphosis was due to a divine judgment which will be presently explained. It is commonly believed from of old that they bathe in the Ganges, worship at Rāmēsvaram, take their food at Tiru-kaḻu-kunram, and rest during night at Chidambaram.

In this connection, an incident reported about two years ago in almost all the newspapers of Madras may be mentioned. On June 17, 1921, at about 9 a.m., two white eagles were observed at the Madura temple. They were immediately photographed, and the photograph was sent to the Trustee of the temple of Tiru-kaḻu-kunram, with the following letter from the Receiver of the Madura temple :—

"... Two eagles came to Pottāmarai tank

within the Sri Mīnākshi Temple at about 9 a.m. this day, bathed in the tank and rested on the steps

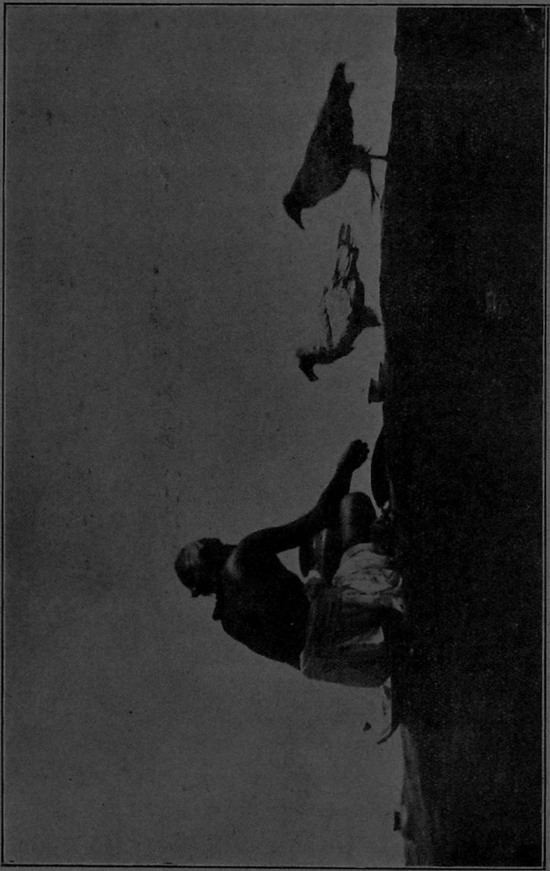

FIG. 8. THE EAGLES TAKING FOOD AT THE HANDS OF THE PANDARAM

of the tank for nearly two hours. A photo of them

was taken at about 10.30 a.m. . . . They flew round the Pottāmarai tank and rested at the *mandapam* adjoining the tank near Vibhūthi Piḷḷaiyār. They were then caught, and detained for a few minutes and then released. People here say that they are the identical eagles that go daily to Tiru-kaḻu-kunram. I request that you will kindly let me know if the birds photographed are the same you see at your temple, and whether they have been seen there at the usual hour or at any time during the course of this day.'

The Trustee of the Tiru-kaḻu-kunram temple replied that he, as well as a number of other gentlemen to whom he showed the photograph, could at once identify the birds in the photograph as being the sacred eagles of Tiru-kaḻu-kunram.

**Puranic history of the Eagles**

The Purānas relate that two eagles have been associated with Tiru-kaḻu-kunram in the Kritha, Trēthā, Dvāpara and Kali Yugas of the present Mahā Yuga. Like the days of the week and the months of the year, the four Yugas recur periodically. The Kali Yuga was ushered in 5,023 years ago, when certain constellations were in conjunction, and this aeon will last for 432,000 years. Before the Kali Yuga was the Dvāpara Yuga, which lasted for 864,000 years. Before the Dvāpara Yuga was the Trēthā Yuga, which lasted for 1,296,000 years, and before the Trēthā Yuga was the Kritha Yuga which lasted for 1,728,000 years. During each of these four immense cycles a pair of eagles have frequented this temple for worship and deliverance.

The eagles ascribed to the Kritha Yuga were named Chaṇḍa and Prachaṇḍa. They were the creations of a most learned Brāhman skilled in miraculous achievements, who was called Vriththasravanas, and who lived in the country of Sālmali. He desired to secure for these birds the leadership of the bird kingdom, but they did not care for this honour. They preferred spiritual blessings. They came to Rudrakōti, where they worshipped Siva. Siva being pleased with their devotion and penance, made them the leaders of his personal attendants.

**The Eagles of the first three Yugas**

During the next Yuga, Jatāyu and Sampāthi—the eagles we hear of in the *Rāmāyana*—are said to have worshipped here. They were cursed by the sage Hamsa who had seen them flying towards the sun, emulating each other in their flight. The sage apprehending evil to Sūrya Bhagavān, wished that Sampāthi should have his wings burnt and fall on the Malaya mountains, and that Jatāyu should fall on the Vindhya mountains. Seeking redemption from this curse, these birds came to Rudrakōti, where, instructed by the sage Mārkandēya, they worshipped Siva with steady devotion. Siva appeared before them and said that Jatāyu would be rid of his curse at the time of his rendering help to Rāma in the Daṇḍakāranya forest, and that Sampāthi would be freed on his helping Hanumān, the ally of Rāma, in his search after Sita, the wife of Rāma.

During the Dvāpara Yuga, two brothers, Sambhu Gupta and Mahā Gupta by name, are said to have done penance at this place. One of them was an

ardent devotee of Siva and the other of Sakti, and they disputed with each other as to which of these deities was superior. They finally appealed to Siva Himself to settle this question. Siva told them that their quarrel was a foolish one, since He and His Sakti were one and inseparable. But the devotees would not end their dispute even after this decision. So Siva gave them eagle bodies. They worshipped Him at Tiru-kaḻu-kunram for a long time and regained their human forms by baths in the *Indra Tīrtham*.

**Visit of the two eagles**

During the current Kali Yuga, the daily visit of the two eagles at Tiru-kaḻu-kunram brings home to us the tradition of our sages, how two brothers, Pūsha and Vithātha, abandoning the entanglements of worldly life, betook themselves to the forest and earnestly strove for spiritual freedom; how in meditation they beheld Śiva and besought Him to grant them this highest of boons immediately; how they were informed that, being yet unripe for such a state, they would have to wait for another embodiment; how they became discontented and impatient; and how they were immediately transformed into two eagles and made to take the circuit of different holy temples for many more centuries of the Kali Yuga until the day of liberation from their bird-forms occurs.

**The Temple of Vedagirisvara**

The temple of Vēdagirisvara, on the summit of the hill stands, (Fig. 9) as has been already stated, on the Atharvana peak. It faces the east and contains one *prākāram* (court). The sanctum (*mūlasthānam*)

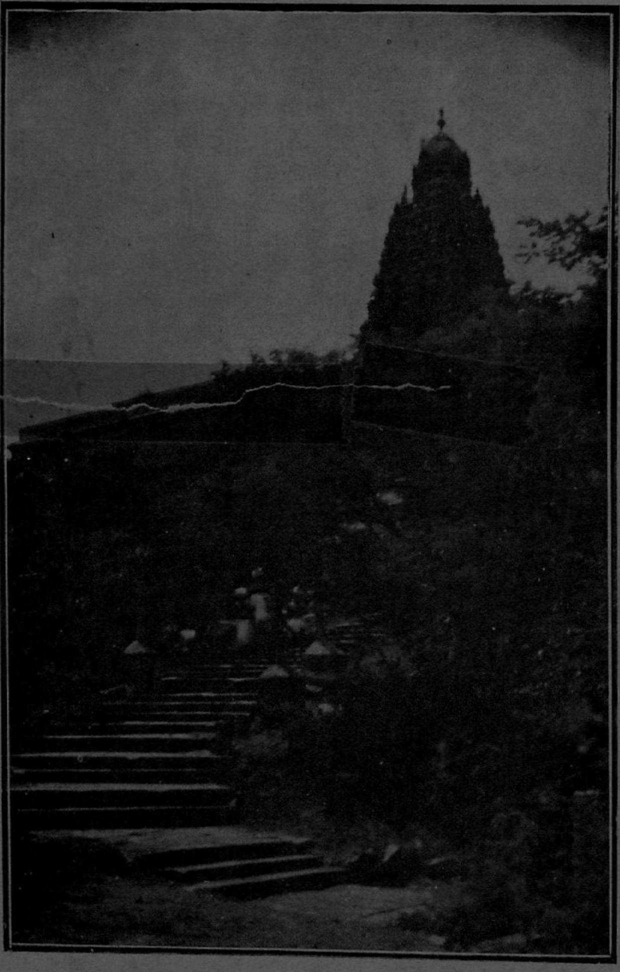

FIG. 9. THE TEMPLE ON THE HILL

of this temple is constructed from three huge blocks of stone, on which are carved, on the inside, images of several Dēvas. The principal figure in the temple is a *Svayambhu Lingam* (self-existent emblem) in the form of a cone or plantain flower, and this is sheathed by a stone-cut cover. It is traditionally believed that once in twelve years there occurs a lightning stroke within or about the precincts of the sanctum, which is interpreted to mean a visit of Indra to the shrine. Two instances of such strokes have been recorded. One of these happened in the year 1889, and the other, twelve years afterwards, in 1901. No damage was caused to any portion of the temple on either of these occasions. The lightning is said to have circuited thrice round the Lingam and then disappeared into the ground! A hole at the spot where the lightning strokes occurred is pointed out to pilgrims.

**Traditions about the Thunderbolt**

The reason of these manifestations is given in the following story. Indra, pitying a maiden who was crying for her golden ball which had rolled down, went in search of it, and met, at the place where the ball had disappeared, a young man. Indra suspected him of having taken the ball, not knowing that Siva Himself had assumed that form. Fortunately Nārada and Brihaspati, who were passing that way, and who knew the truth, advised him to go to Rudrakōti and there worship Siva in order to expiate the sin of having thought ill of Him. Indra did as he was told and gained the grace of Siva. Since then, he has continued to do obeisance at Vēdagiri once in every twelve years in the form of a thunderbolt.

Besides Indra, the king of dēvas, Brahmā the Creator, Subrahmanya, the generalissimo of the celestial forces, the twelve Ādityas and Chandra, have come to our world and worshipped Siva at this temple and the surrounding *āsramas* in order to gain their respective *Ishtakāmyas* (heart's desires).

**Worship by Brahma**

Brahmā, who once treated Sarasvati with greater favour than Sāvitri, displeased the latter, who, knowing that her husband had forgotten the laws relating to the treatment of co-wives, wished that he should forget the Vēdas also. The wish took effect, and Brahmā found that, with his forgetfulness of the Vēdas, his powers of endurance, persistence and resistance also declined. Two Rākshasas, Madhu and Kaitabha, then began to torment him. Brahmā sought the aid of Vishnu who advised him to worship Śiva at Rudrakōti. Brahmā did so, and regaining his powers, freed himself from the cruelties of the Rākshasas, and treated Sāvitri and Sarasvati alike.

**Subrahmanyam's worship**

Sri Subrahmanyam, while yet a boy, was sent to Brahmā to learn the chanting of the Vēdas (*Vēda-pārāyanam*). When Brahmā began to chant them, Subrahmanyam begged him to explain first the meaning of the mystic word *Ōm*. When his teacher informed him that Siva's instructions were that *Vēda-pārāyanam* should be taught and not the meaning of the Vēdic words, Subrahmanyam still insisted on knowing first the meaning of *Ōm*. For the setting at naught of the parental command he had to expiate the sin by going to Vēdagiri and performing penance.

The Ādityas also came here to worship Siva in order to derive from Him superior power with which to overthrow some Rākshasas who were troubling them. Chandra Bhagavān has also worshipped at this place in order to regain the protection which Siva had mercifully afforded him by placing the glory of the crescent moon in his matted locks, and which he had lost by participating in Daksha's sacrifice.

**'Orukal' Mandapam**

By the side of the temple of Vēdagirīsvara there are two other buildings on the hill. One of these is a shrine dedicated to Tirumalai Chokammāḷ, which lies at a slightly lower level to the south-west of the main temple. The other edifice is more interesting and stands about a hundred feet below the Vēdagirīsvara temple. It is in the form of a cave cut out of the rock, and is an exquisite piece of architectural workmanship. It is known as *Orukal Mandapam*, from the fact that it has been hewn out of a single rock. It contains some fine sculptures and a Lingam. From some of the many inscriptions to be found on the capital of the second pillar in the upper verandah of this shrine, it would appear that this *mandapam* was built by the great Pallava King, Narasimha Varma I,[1] the sacker of

[1] This Pallava King reigned at the end of the seventh century A.D., and it was under him that Siruthondar, whose history is narrated in the *Periyapurānam*, served as a general.

Probably it was he (Narasimhavarman I) that renewed also the central shrine on the summit of the hill, for, according to an inscription on the west wall of the strong-room in the temple at the foot (this at one time should have been a sanctum though now used for the storage of valuables) Chōḻa king Āditya I renewed the grants originally made to the Mulāsthāna temple (referring evidently to the Vēdagirīsvara on the hill?) by Skanda Sishya and renewed later on by Narasimhavarman I.

Vātāpi and the builder of the famous *rathas* at Mahābalipuram. This *mandapam* has been 'protected' under the *Ancient Monuments Preservation Act*, on account of its architectural beauty and historic interest. An elaborate description of this *Orukal* (i. e., monolithic) *mandapam*, together with an elucidation of the inscriptions thereon, is to be found in the *Epigraphist's Report* for the year 1908–09, from which the following extract has been taken.

'The monolithic cave called *Orukal Mandapa* on the Vēdagirīsvara hill at Tiru-kaḻu-kunram, lies to the east of the hill some fifty steps down the descending side of the *pradhakshina*, to its right. Being cut into the boulder at a level about nine feet from its foot, the cave is reached by two narrow flights of steps from the northern and southern sides, which meet the cave in the middle at its front. There are two verandahs in the cave, an upper and lower one, the latter being in level only a few inches below the former. Each of these two verandahs is supported by four massive pillars, of which the two middle ones are free. These latter, where they are rectangular, measure roughly two feet by one foot eleven inches. The middle portions of the pillars are octagonal, though the facets are not always of equal breadth. In the lower verandah are two graceful life-size statues which are decorated with ornaments round the neck, at the wrists and on the shoulders and wear a girdle and an undergarment. In the upper verandah there exists only one cell in the centre and in it is a huge lingam on a pedestal. The cell is at a higher level than the verandah and is approached by two steps. On either side of the entrance into this cell is the image of a Dvāra-pālaka. Standing figures of Brahmā and

This establishes beyond doubt historically the antiquity of this temple as one of the oldest in Southern India; for Skanda Sishya reigned long anterior to Narasimhavarman I of the seventh century.

Vishnu, flank the central cell and are placed against the back wall of the cave, not in a line with the lingam inside the cell but some feet in front of it. The following measurements will show that the central cell is cut deeper than the rest of the cave and was perhaps meant to be the sanctuary :—

Breadth of cave, 21 feet 6½ inches.
Depth of back wall of the cell, 26 feet 2 inches.
Depth to the entrance of the cell, 17 feet 4 inches.
Depth to the figure of Brahmā or of Vishnu, 18 feet 6 inches.
Height of the cave, 8 feet 5½ inches.

The importance of the central cell is also indicated by its being fashioned into a fine-looking *mandapa* with the basement rising in tiers and supporting short pillars over which the beams and the rounded eaves seem to rest.

Thus the monolithic cave on the hill at Tiru-kaḻu-kunram appears to have been meant as a place of worship for the three gods of the Hindu Trinity—Brahmā, Vishnu and Siva. It is, however, now neglected and no ceremonial worship is conducted in it. Nevertheless, pilgrims bow before the uncared for lingam which is believed to represent the Siva who, according to the *Sthalapurāna*, cursed the two Rishis dwelling on the hill to become kites.'

**'Muvar Kovil'**

Near the southern end of the road that encircles the hill is to be found the shrine which is called *Mūvar Kōvil* after the three Tamil apostles of Saivism. It is said that these saints, when they came to Tiru-kaḻu-kunram, did not go up to the temple on the hill for fear of profaning the sacred hill by the trampling of feet [1];

[1] Even now many people do not go up the hill, and even if they go, as a propitiation for the sin thus committed, circumambulate the hill on alighting.

that they remained at the bottom of the hill, and sang their hymns in praise of Śiva; that the place from whence they sang their devotional songs is marked by this shrine.

**The temple at the foot of the hill**

The temple is a very spacious one, having two *prākārams* or courts, the outer one measuring nearly 500 feet and the inner one 300 feet. The first court has four entrances, excluding two minor entrances at the southern and northern gates. The eastern gate is the main entrance, leading directly to the inner *prākāram* through another gōpuram named Rishi-gōpuram (Fig. 10) having fine plaster figures of Gods, etc., on it. Entering the temple by this gate, we notice a shrine dedicated to Vināyaka (Fig. 11). By the side of this shrine is a spacious and fine looking *mandapam* supported by sixteen pillars. Crossing this, we pass on to the entrance at the southern gate, where we find on the stone jambs several beautiful carvings of Lingams and of worshippers around them. Near this entrance is the *Āmai Mandapam*, (Fig. 12) consisting of a raised platform supported by an *āmai* or tortoise. This *mandapam* is a valuable piece of ancient Indian architecture. Passing this *mandapam* we come to the western gate, by the side of which is a flower garden. Next we pass on to the northern entrance, which has the largest of all the *gōpurams* in the temple. Adjoining this *gōpuram* is a small and picturesque tank (Fig. 13) with an image of Nandi on one of its banks. This image is meant to represent the story that he once performed penance here for having disobeyed Siva.

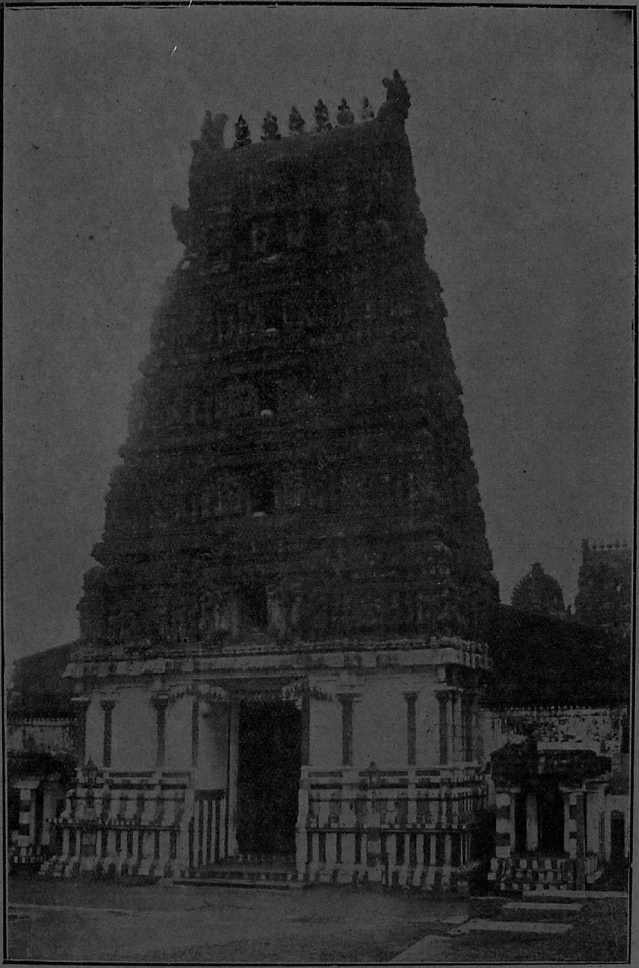

FIG. 10. THE SECOND EASTERN GOPURAM NAMED *Rishi Gopuram*

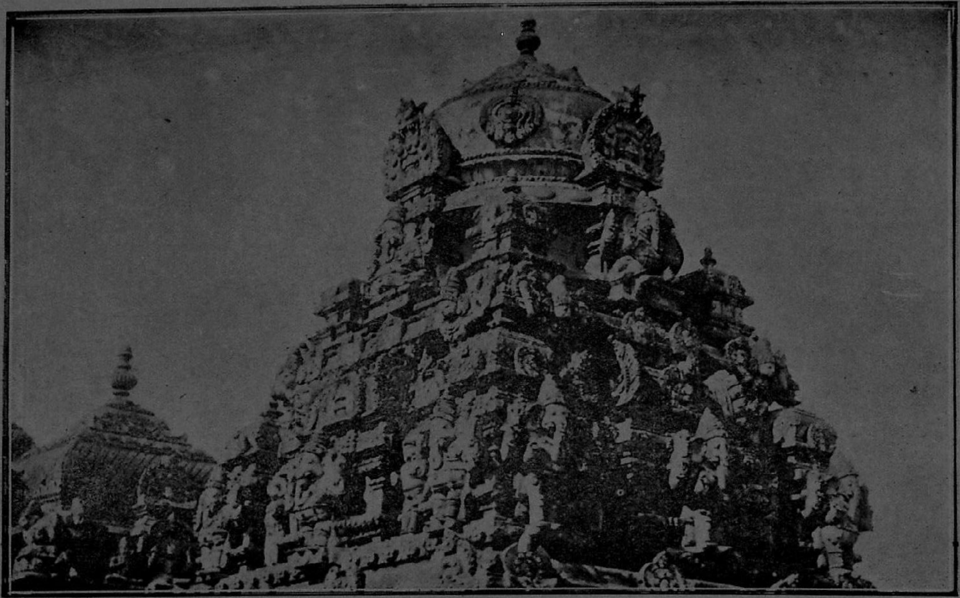

FIG. 11. VINAYAKA SHRINE WITHIN THE TEMPLE

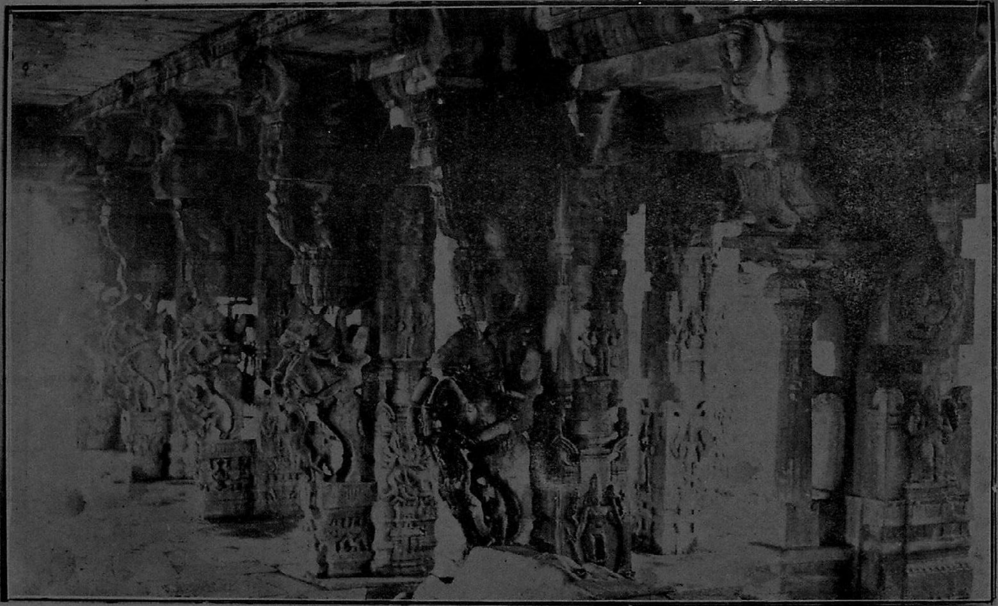

FIG. 12. SCULPTURED PIERS IN THE *Amai-Mandapa* WITHIN THE TEMPLE

FIG. 13. THE NANDI-TIRTHA TANK WITH THE FRONT EAST GOPURAM

On entering the second court, we first meet with a *Dvaja Sthambam* (flag-staff), and behind it is the shrine of Bhakta Vatsala (Fig. 14) with metal figures and stone images of the sixty-three *Nāyanmārs* (devotees) of Śiva surrounding it. It was here that Saint Sundara Mūrthi prayed for and received gold from Siva. To this day this event is kept alive in the memories of the people by the celebration of a festival on the fourth day of the *Brahmōtsavam*. Within this court there are several other shrines dedicated to Sōmaskanda Mūrthi, Vēdagirīsvara (Fig. 15) with Tripurasundari (Figs. 16 and 17) and Vināyaka, Subrahmanya (Fig. 18), Vīrabhadra (Fig. 19) and Mānikkavāchakar. Saint Mānikkavāchakar lived here for some time and received inspiration from Siva.

The image in the shrine dedicated to Vināyaka is said to have been discovered in a place overgrown with plantains, and when it was dug up, it was found to be surrounded by innumerable bees, which circumstance, we are told, led to its being called Vaṇḍu Vana Pillayār. This accounts for plantains standing for the *stala vriksha* (local tree) of the place and it is being at the same time treated as a *vāhana* (vehicle) for the god during processions (Fig. 20).

Here also is a shrine for Prathyaksha Vēdagirīsvara, to the east of which is a beautiful hall full of fine sculptures. This hall faces the south and is used for the decoration of the Goddess Tripurasundari during the *Navarātri* and *Âdi-Pūram* festivals.

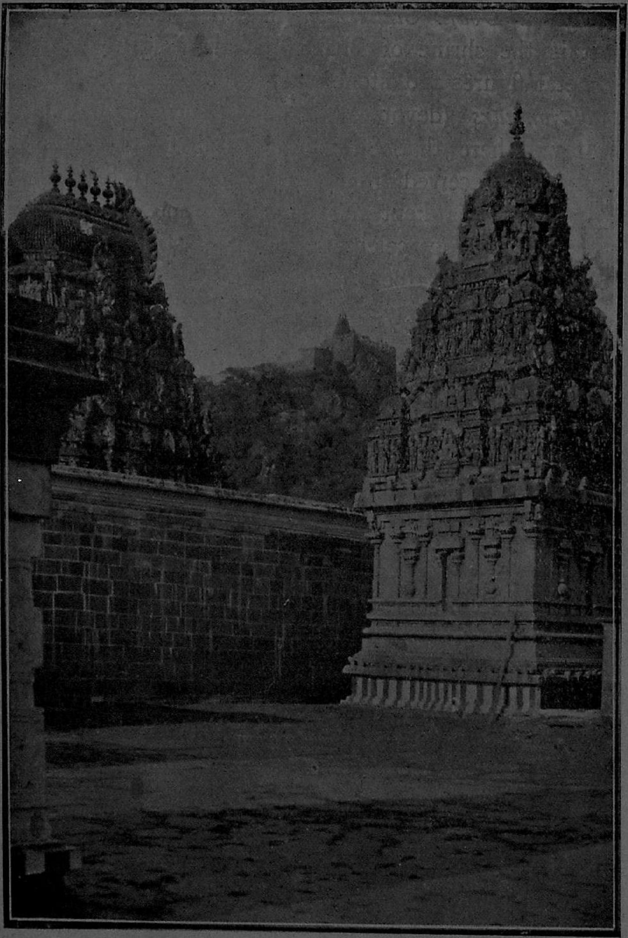

FIG. 14. SHRINES WITHIN THE TEMPLE WITH THE HILL-TEMPLE AT THE CENTRE

FIG. 15. GOD ON ADIKARA-NANDI

FIG. 16. GODDESS ON KAMADENU

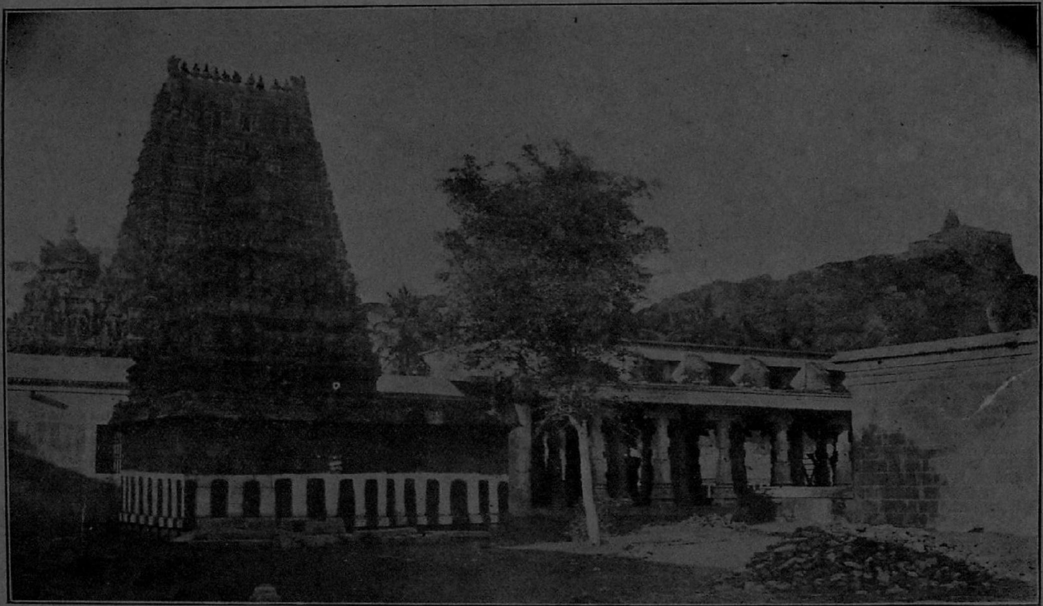

FIG. 17. THE SHRINE OF THE GODDESS WITHIN THE TEMPLE WITH A VIEW OF THE UPPER HILL

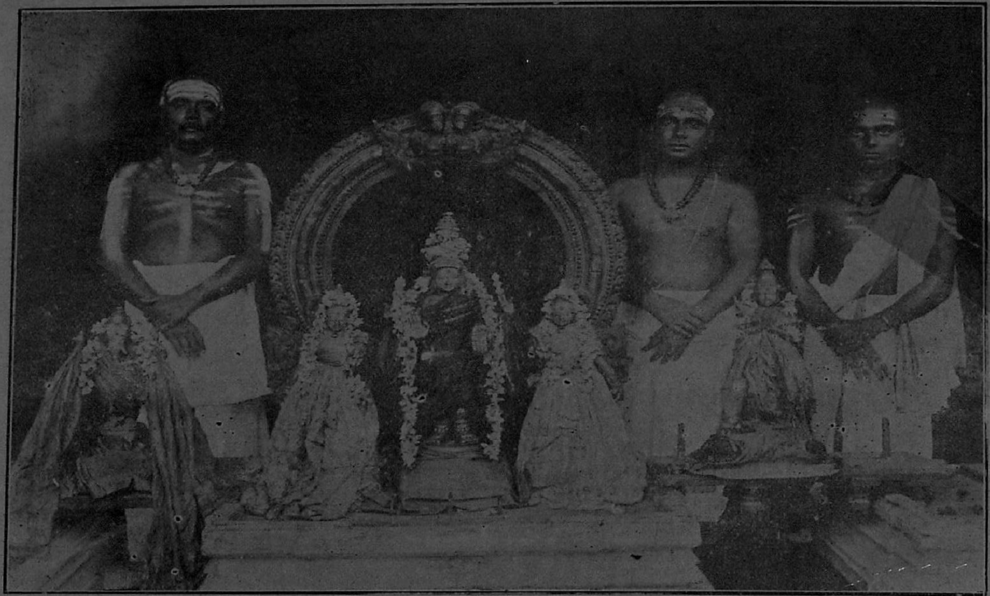

FIG. 18. GOD SUBRAHMANYA WITH HIS CONSORTS

FIG. 19. GOD VIRABHADRA WITHIN THE TEMPLE

The figures carved on the pillars of this hall suggest the origin of this temple at the foot of the hill. The carvings represent a Chōḷa king named Suraguru (Fig. 21) going out to hunt (Fig. 22) with a number of elephants, (Fig. 23) horses and camels (Fig. 24)

**The origin of the temple tradition**

FIG. 20. THE PLANTAIN (*Kadali*) *Vahana* OF THE GOD

and his killing a porcupine. Out of the dead porcupine comes the form of a man (Fig. 25). The king is also represented as having unintentionally killed a cow, and in the same carving we find a

FIG. 21. KING SURAGURU

damsel coming out of the body of the dead cow. In a third carving we find a dog seeking its master, the king's minister. The king prepares himself to be crushed by the wheels of his own chariot (Fig. 26) as a punishment for the sin he had committed; similar to the[1] incident that occurred at Tiruvārūr in the district of Tanjore at one time a Chōḻa capital

[1] Other particulars relating to this incident of the criminal administration in those olden days by Chōḻa kings, supported by epigraphs, is fully treated in *South Indian Shrines*, second edition, chapter xiv, page 372.

during the days of his predecessor Manu Chōḻa; when the mother-cow of a dead calf trodden over by the prince in the course of a drive complained of the offence to the king at his palace by ringing the bell fixed in front of the palace for the purpose

FIG. 22. SURAGURU AIMING AN ARROW AT A PIG

(fig. 27). Then the sin of his having killed the cow (*gōhatti*) escaped out of his body through the head in the form of a crow (*kākkāi*) (fig. 28) and fell on the south-west of the sacred hill of Vēdagiri and got petrified immediately! There it still remains

with the name *kākkāi kunru* (the 'crow hill') (fig. 29). A testimony that this hill is a personification of sins, according to Hindu belief, is to be found in the fact that it is ever barren, with no trees growing on it, close by the luxurient Vēdagiri.

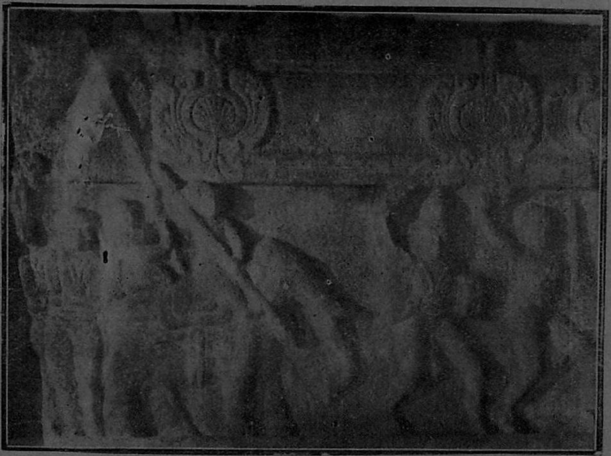

FIG. 23. SURAGURU'S ELEPHANT REGIMENT

The meaning of these sculptures can be gathered from the *Stalapurānam*, where a detailed account is given of a king named Suraguru who reigned at Mahābalipuram, and caused the Baktavatsala temple to be built (the Tamil literature *Kalingattuparani*, also makes mention of him). The Purāna relates that this king, when out hunting, killed a porcupine in the forests near Vēdagiri; that out of the dead animal came a Rākshasa, who informed the king that he had been metamorphosed by sage Mārkandēya, and that he had been awaiting the day when the king

would deliver him. It is recorded that, on the same occasion, the king killed a cow by mistake and that, as he was preparing to throw himself under the wheels of his car, a beautiful damsel appeared from the body of the cow. She told him that he had not committed any sin, but that he had been

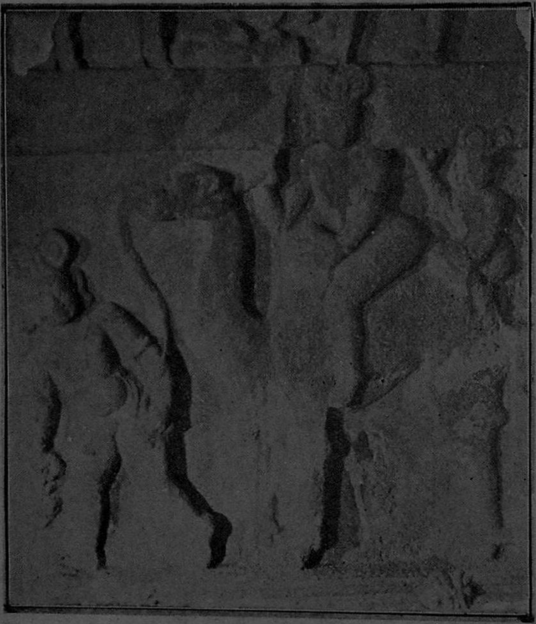

FIG. 24. SURAGURU'S CAMEL REGIMENT

made the instrument of her deliverance from a curse which had changed her form into that of a cow. She further informed him that she was Tilōttama, and that she had incurred the displeasure of Nandi-dēva, who possessed the body of a bull, and whom

she tried to tempt in the guise of a lovely cow. Immediately after she regained her human shape, a dog belonging to the king's minister, which had jumped into a tank near by for a swim, was found

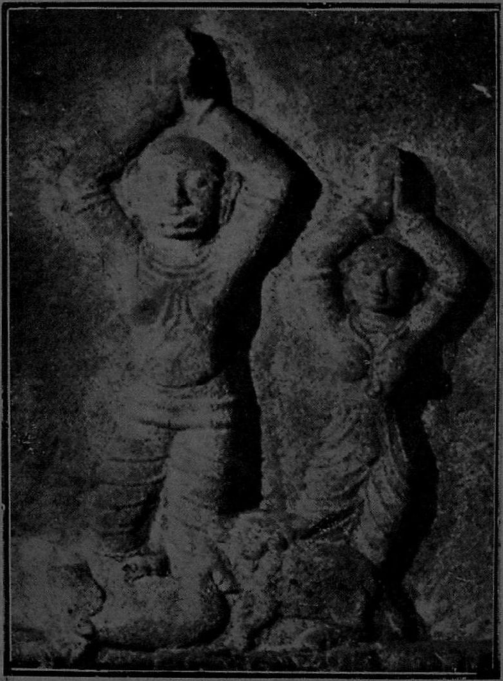

FIG. 25. AN ASURA COMING OUT OF A PIG AND A MAIDEN FROM A COW

to be cured of its leprous sores! The minister, who was also suffering from the same disease, seeing the marvellous cure effected in the case of the dog, bathed in the tank and was cured!!

It is said that this Suraguru was a Chōḷa king who reigned at Māmallapuram, and that residential buildings were put up by him in the vicinity of Tiru-kaḻu-kunram in the valley between Irumbuli

FIG. 26. SURAGURU'S CAR

and Tattāramalai, adjoining Kottimaṅgalam. The two mounds, Rājan-tāṅgal and Nāchi-mōdu, seen near Kottimaṅgalam, are pointed out as the sites of the royal camps. An inscription found in the Baktavatsala temple mentions Tiru-kaḻu-kunram

as 'Ulakaḷanda Chōla Puram', a city of Chōla, the ruler of the world.

Many other inscriptions[1] also have been found in this temple. One of these relates to the forty-second year of the Chōḷa king, Kulōttuṅga I, and records the purchase, by an inhabitant of Rājarājapuram, of lands near Māmallapuram, for the maintenance of a *matam* dedicated

**Inscriptions**

FIG. 27. A COW RINGING THE BELL IN FRONT OF A PALACE TO PREFER A COMPLAINT

to Naminandi Adigal, a Saiva saint mentioned in *Periyapurānam*. A second inscription records the gift of certain villages to the temple and another the celebration of a festival by Bukkaraya in Saka 1328.

[1] A summary of these, as recorded in the volumes issued by the Epigraphical Department, is extracted in Appendix 'A'.

Sage Visvāmithra is also said to have lived here for some time, near a tank which still bears the name of Visvāmithra Tīrtham. This tank is also called Āṇḍarājan kuḷam.

**Tirthams**

Many other *Tīrthams* exist in Tiru-kaḷu-kunram. On the western side of the '*Pradakshina Bātta*' (the road round the hill) is Varuna Tīrtham, otherwise known as Kōti Vināyaka Tīrtham. To the south of the temple at the foot of the hill is the

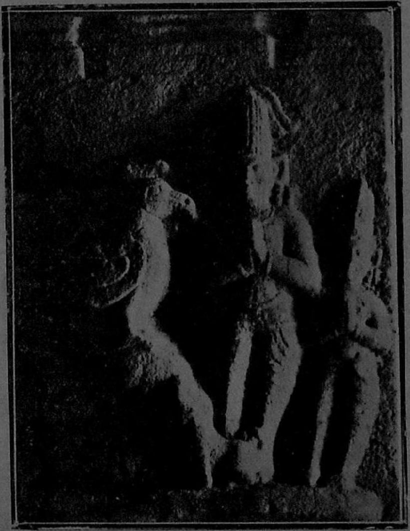

FIG. 28. THE SIN OF SURAGURU IN THE FORM OF A CROW ESCAPING FROM HIS BODY

Meijñāna Tīrtham. Close by is the Agastya Tīrtham or the Ponniṭṭa Nādar Kuḷam on account of the incident concerning Saint Sundara referred to already. To the north of the temple of the Goddess lies Mārkandēya Tīrtham. In later

FIG. 29. *Kakkai-kuṇḍu* NEAR THE HILL ON WHICH THE GOD PRESIDES

days this tank was renovated by a Chēra king, and came to be called after him Chēramān Kuḷam.

But the tank which excels all these in sanctity is the Sanka Tīrtham (Figs. 30 and 31) which lies at the end of the road starting from the eastern entrance of the Bakthavatsala temple.

**Sanka Tirtham**

It measures 560 feet by 760 feet. Facing this tank is a Vināyaka shrine and in the centre of the tank is a beautiful *mandapam*. The tank gets its supply of water mostly from the streams that flow down from the hill, and it is said that the water possesses curative powers. From this tank conches are occasionally taken and used as vessels for *abishēkam* every year on the last Monday of the month of Krithikai.

It is said that when Sage Mārkandēya visited this place, he performed his *Pūja* on the banks of this tank. Finding no conch to perform the *abishēkam*, and having none with him, he created one by his *yōgic* power and took it from the waters of this tank. The place where he performed this *Sanka Pūja* is now marked by a shrine, the deity of which is known as Mārkandēsvara or Tīrtēsvara. They say that Mārkandēya, when leaving this place, prayed that conch shells, (Fig. 32) similar to the one he had created, might be found in the tank so as to be useful to other worshippers. Conch shells are sometimes seen floating in the tank and are collected. The last two occasions on which they were gathered were July 18, 1908 and June 26, 1919.

It is believed that, once in twelve years, there is a meeting of the Goddesses of the chief rivers of

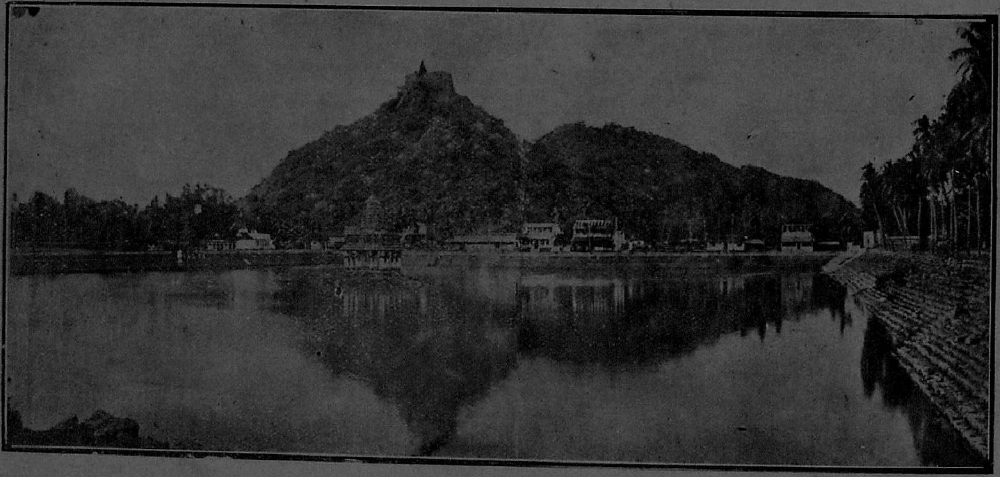

FIG. 30. SOUTH VIEW OF HILL AND SANKA-TIRTHA TANK

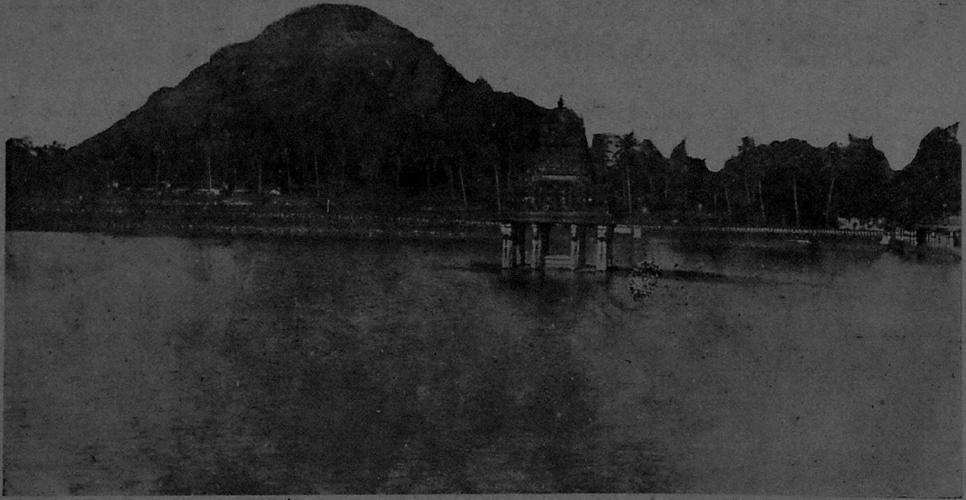

FIG. 31. SANKHA TIRTHA TANK WITH THE KAKKAI KUNRU

India at this tank, and in conformity with this belief, a festival known as the *Sanka-tirtha-pushkaram* is celebrated here. The cause of such a meeting is thus explained. Once when the Goddesses of Ganga, Bhōgavati, Yamuna, Gōdāvari, Kāvēri and other rivers met, the question was raised which amongst them was superior and should

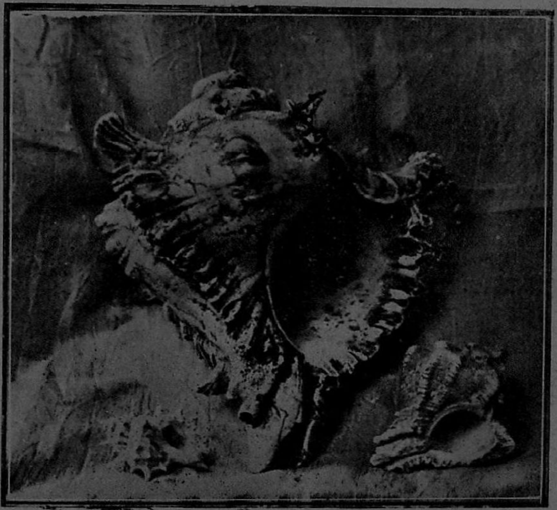

FIG. 32. CONCHES TAKEN FROM SANKA TIRTHAM TANK

be honoured most by the King of the Ocean (Samuthra Rāja), their husband. He could not answer them, and so he appealed to Siva. Siva addressed the assembled Goddesses at Kōdilingēs-vara (Gōdāvari) and graciously informed them that of all the *tīrthas* the highest in purity and sanctity was the Sanka-tīrtha, and that if they all bathed in this pond at the moment of the passing of *Brihaspati*

FIG. 33. EAST GOPURA OF THE TEMPLE AT RUDRANKOIL

(Jupiter) from *Simha Rāsi* (Leo) to *Kanyā Rāsi* (Virgo) once in every twelve years, they would be equally esteemed by the Samuthra Rāja. In pursuance of this advice, these river Goddesses meet there at the time of the *Sankatirtha-pushkaram* and bless those believers who partake in the bath.

**Rudrankoil**

On the south-eastern side of the Sanka-tīrtham, there is the village Rudrankōil at a distance of about two furlongs. The temple (Fig. 33) here consists of only one court with the God in the middle. The importance of this temple is very great, for wherever we find mention of Tiru-kaḻu-kunram it is mentioned only by the designation of Rudrakōti. There are many incidents connected with the importance of this place, as already narrated. By the side of the temple is a sacred tank named Rudrakōti-tīrtham.

**Importance of the place**

The natural beauty of the village, the atmosphere of sanctity that pervades the whole place, the ever-recurring appearance of the sacred Eagles, the emanations from the medicinal herbs that grow luxuriantly on the hill sides, the numerous tanks with their respective traditions, the abiding faith in the old legends called the *Purānas* which declare that Vishnu, Brahmā, Indra and other heavenly beings have come here for worship, the merciful dispensation of Siva that He is to be found at the summit of Vēdagiri, whether exoterically or esoterically understood, attract devout Hindus from all parts of India. Thousands of men 'and women come here every year and return home steeped in godliness and spiritual joy to their heart's content.

# APPENDIX A

**Tirukkalukkunram inscriptions noticed in the '*Inscriptions of the Madras Presidency*,' Vol. i, pages 339–344.**

" 167 *of* 1894.—(Tamil). On the wall of the strong room of the Vēdagirīśvara temple. A record of the Chōḷa king Kō-Rājakēsarivarman (a predecessor of Parāntaka I), dated in his twenty-seventh year, renewing a grant made by the Pallava kings Skandaśishya and Vātapikoṇḍa Narasimhavarman. [See *Madras Christian College Magazine* for October 1890, and *Ep. Ind.*, III, 277–80. Mr. Venkayya identifies Narasimha with Narasimhavarman I, the contemporary of Gñānasambanda and Śiruttoṇḍa.]

The *Madras Christian College Magazine*, Vol. viii, No. 4, page 275.

'Hail! Prosperity! In the twenty-seventh year of (the reign of) Ko-Râjakesarivarman. Whereas Skandaśishyan had given (some land) free from taxes to Śrî-Mûlasthânattupperumâṉaḍigaḷ (*i.e.*, the feet of the god of the sacred Mûlasthâna) of Tirukkaṟukkuṉṟam in Taṉkûṟu (a sub-division) of Kaḷattûr-koṭṭam, (and) accordingly Vâtápikoṇḍa-Naraśiṁkappottaraiyar maintained (the grant) in that manner, I, Râjakesarivarman, at the request of Puttaṉ, the son of Guṇavaṉ, (and) lord of the adjoining shore, preserved (the grant) as former kings had kept it. The feet of one who protects this charity shall be on my head!'

168 *of* 1894.—(Tamil). On the same wall. A record of the Chōḷa king Madiraikoṇḍa Kō-Parakēsarivarman (*i.e.*, Parāntaka I) in his thirteenth year. Records gift of a lamp by Neḍumāl Śāttan Śennippērayan of Karaikkāṭṭūr in Āmūr-kōṭṭam and his mother. [See *Ep. Ind.*, III, 280–1].

169 *of* 1894.—(Tamil.) On the same wall. A record of the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Kaṇṇaradēva (Krishṇa III), dated in his seventeenth year. [Published by Venkayya in the *Madras*

*Christian College Magazine* for April 1892, and *Ep. Ind.*, III, pp. 282-6. Records gift of lamp by a native of Kārai].

The *Madras Christian College Magazine*, Vol. ix, No. 10, page 751.

'Hail! Prosperity! In the seventeenth year of (the reign of) the illustrious Kaṉṉara-deva, who took Kachchi and Tañjai,—Parântakapperarayaṉ *alias* Baladevaṉ, the lord of the shore, gave one *nundâviḷakku* to Śrî-Mûlastânattu-Perumâṉaḍigaḷ of Tirukkaṟukkuṉṟam (which belongs) to Taṉ-kûṟu (a sub-division) of Kaḷattûr-koṭṭam. This (grant) shall be protected by all the *mâheśvaras* as long as the moon and the sun (endure). If (we) obstruct (the burning of) the lamp put up by Parântakapperarayaṉ, we shall incur the sin committed by those who commit (sins) all through the seven hundred *kâdam* from Gaṅgâ to Kumari (?). (The signature of) the Sabhâ of Tirukkaṟukkuṉṟam.'

'Hail! Prosperity! In the nineteenth year of (the reign of) Kaṉṉara-deva, who took Kachchi and Tañjai,—Śeṉṉippe [ra] raiyaṉ, (*alias*) Śâttaṉ, the lord of the shore, built an *ambalam* (*i.e.*, a hall) to the south of the Śrî-Mûlasthâna in Tirukkaṟukkuṉṟam, (which belongs) to Taṉ-kûṟu (a sub-division) of Kaḷattûr-koṭṭam. As a compound for this *ambalam* (? ambalappuṟam) (he) purchased (some) land (called) Kaḷarichcheṟuvu along with (its) well from Nakkaḍi Bhaṭṭaṉ, *alias* Îśâna-Śivaṉ. Whereas (Śeṉṉipperarayaṉ) gave an ambalapaṭṭi for pouring water and providing fire, (we), the *sabhâ* (of Tirukkaṟukkuṉṟam), having taken from this (man) the money for taxes, gave (the land) tax-free as long as our village, the moon and the sun endure. The feet of one who protects this charity shall be on (our) heads; one who injures this charitable gift shall incur the sin committed by those who commit (sins) all through the seven hundred *kâdam* from Gaṅgâ to Kumari (?)'

170 *of* 1894.—(Tamil). On the same wall. A record of the Rāshṭrakūta king Kaṇṇaradēva, dated in his nineteenth year. Records that a Sāttan of Kārai built a hall in the shrine and provided for water, fire, etc., besides one paṭṭi of

land which he had purchased from Īśāna Śiva or Nakkaḍi Bhaṭṭa. The money was deposited with the local Sabhā.

171 *of* 1894.—(Tamil). On the same wall. A record of the Chōḷa king Kō-Parakēsarivariman *alias* Rājēndra-Chōḷa-dēva (I, 1012–43) in his sixteenth year. Gift of a lamp.

172 *of* 1894.—(Tamil). On the same wall. Records in the twenty-sixth year of the Chōḷa king Kō-Rājakēsarivarman *alias* Rājadhi-rājadēva gift of land. [The king was very probably Rājādhirāja I who ruled from 1018 to 1052.]

173 *of* 1894.—(Tamil). On the same wall. Records in the fifth year of the Chōḷa king Kō-Parakēsarivarman *alias* Rājēndradēva (1052–63) gift of land.

174 *of* 1894.—(Tamil). On the same wall. Records in the fourteenth year of the Chōḷa king Rājakēsarivarman *alias* Kulōttuṅgachōḷadēva (1070–1118) gift of 90 ewes for a lamp. [See *S.I.I.*, III, No. 69, pp. 143–8].

*South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. iii, pages 146–148.

'Hail! Prosperity! While the wheel of his (*authority*) went as far as the golden circle (*i.e.* Mount Mêru) on the earth, which was surrounded by the moat of the sea, that was (*again*) surrounded by (*his*) fame, (*the king*) newly wedded, in the time (*when he was still*) heir-apparent, the brilliant goddess of victory at Śakkarakôṭṭam by deeds of valour and seized a herd of mountains of rut (*i.e.*, rutting elephants) at Vayirâgaram.

(*He*) unsheathed (*his*) sword, showed the strength of (*his*) arm, and spurred (*his*) war-steed, so that the army of the king of Kondaḷa, (*whose spear had*) a sharp point, retreated.

Having established (*his*) fame, having put on the garland of (*the victory over*) the northern region, and having stopped the prostitution of the goddess with the sweet and excellent lotus-flower (*i.e.* Lakshmî) of the southern region, and the loneliness of the goddess of the good country whose garment is the Poṉṉi, (*he*) put on by right (*of inheritance*) the pure royal crown of jewels, while the kings of the earth bore his two feet (*on their heads*) as a large crown,

The river (*of the rules*) of the ancient king Manu swelled, (*and*) the river (*of the sins*) of the Kali (*age*) dried up.

(*His*) sceptre swayed over every (*quarter of*) this continent of the *nâval* (tree); the white light of the sacred shadow of (*his*) white parasol shone everywhere on the circle of the great earth; (*and his*) tiger (*-banner*) fluttered un-rivalled on the Mêru (*mountain*).

(*Before him*) stood a row of elephants showering jewels, which were presented (*as*) tribute by the kings of remote islands whose girdle is the sea.

The excellent head of the refractory king of the south (*i.e.* the Pâṇḍya) lay outside his (*viz.* Kulôttuṅga's) beautiful city, being pecked by kites.

Not only did the speech (*of* Vikkalaṉ) :—After this day a permanent blemish (*will attach to* Kulôttuṅga), as to the crescent (*which is the origin*) of (*his*) family,—turn out wrong, but the bow (*in*) the hand of Vikkalaṉ was not (*even*) bent against (*the enemy*).

Everywhere from Naṅgili of rocky roads—with Maṇalû in the middle—to the Tuṅgabhadrâ, there were lying low the dead (*bodies of his*) furious elephants, his lost pride and (*his*) boasted valour.

The very mountains which (*he*) ascended bent their backs; the very rivers into which (*he*) descended eddied and breached (*the banks*) in their course; (*and*) the very seas into which (*he*) plunged became troubled and agitated.

(*The* Chôḷa *king*) seized simultaneously the two countries (*pâṇi*) called Gaṅgamaṇḍalam and Śiṅgaṇam, troops of furious elephants which had been irretrievably abandoned (*by the enemy*), crowds of women, (*the angles of*) whose beautiful eyes were as pointed as daggers, the goddess of fame, who gladly brought disgrace (*on* Vikkalaṉ), and the great goddess of victory, who changed to the opposite (*side*) and caused (Vikkalaṉ) himself and (*his*) father, who were desirous of the rule over the Western region, to turn their backs again and again on many days.

Having resolved in (*his*) royal mind to conquer also the Pâṇḍi-maṇḍalam (*i.e.* the Pâṇḍya country) with great

fame, (*he*) despatched his great army,—which possessed [excellent horses (*resembling*) the waves of the sea], war-elephants (*resembling*) ships, and troops (*resembling*) water,—as though the Northern ocean was overflowing the Southern ocean.

(*He*) completely destroyed the forest which the five Pañchavas (*i.e.* Pâṇḍyas) had entered as refuge, when they were routed on a battlefield where (*he*) fought (*with them*), and fled cowering with fear.

(*He*) subdued (*their*) country, drove them into hot jungles (*in*) hills where woodmen roamed about, and planted pillars of victory in every region.

(*He*) was pleased to seize the pearl fisheries, the Podiyil (*mountain*) where the three kinds of Tamiḻ (*flourished*), [the (*very*) centre of the (*mountain*) Śaiyam] where furious rutting elephants were captured, and Kaṉṉi, and fixed the boundaries of the Southern (*i.e.* Pâṇḍya) country.

While all the heroes in the Western hill-country (Kuḍamalai-nâḍu) ascended voluntarily to heaven, (*he*) was pleased to bestow on the chiefs of his army, who were mounted on horses, settlements on every road, including (*that which passed*) Kôṭṭâṟu, in order that the enemies might be scattered, and took his seat on the throne acquired in warfare.

(*He*) was pleased to be seated (*on it*) while (*his*) valour and liberality shone like (*his*) necklace of great splendour and (*like*) the flower-garland on (*his*) royal shoulders, (*and*) while (*all his*) enemies prostrated themselves on the ground.

In the [1]4th year (*of the reign*) of this king Râjakêsarivarman, *alias* the emperor Śrî-Kulôttuṅga-Śôḻadêva, 1—one—perpetual lamp was given to Mahâdêva, the lord of the Śrî-Mûlasthâna (*temple*) at Tirukkaḻukkuṉṟam, *alias* Ulagaḷanda-Śôḻapuram, a *dêvadâna* in its own circle (*kûṟu*) in Kaḷattûr-nâḍu, (*a sub-division*) of Kaḷattûr-kôṭṭam, (*a district*) of Jayaṅgoṇḍa-Śôḻa-maṇḍalam, by . . . ppaḷḷi Śelvaṉ Paḷumaḍayaṉ, *alias* Kulôttuṅga-Śôḻa-periyarayaṉ, who resided at Śêvûr, *alias* Śôḻakêraḷanallûr, in Ôymâṉâḍu.

In order (*to supply*) to (*this lamp*) one *uḻakku* of ghee per day, (*measured*) by the *Arumoḻidêvaṉ-uḻakku*, (*he*) granted ninety full-grown ewes, which must neither die nor grow old.

The feet of him who will continue this (*grant*) as long as the moon and the sun exist, shall be on my head. This (*is placed under*) the protection of all *Mâhêśvaras.*

In the 15th year (*of the king's reign*) the above-mentioned person (*also*) granted ninety full-grown ewes, which must neither die nor grow old, for 1 (*other*) perpetual lamp which (*he*) had given. This (*is placed under*) the protection of all *Mâhêśvaras*.'

175 *of* 1894.—(Tamil). On the same wall. Records in the seventh year of the Chōḷa king Kō-Rājakēsarivarman *alias* Vīra-Rājēndradēva (I, ? 1063–70) gift of a lamp.

176 *of* 1894.—(Tamil). On the same wall. Records in the third year of the Chōḷa king Vikrama-Chōḷadēva (1118–35) gift of a lamp.

177 *of* 1894.—(Tamil). On the east wall of the second prākāra of the same temple, right of entrance. A damaged record of the Vīra-Dēvarāya-Uḍaiyār, dated Vikriti.

178 *of* 1894.—(Tamil). On the same wall. Records in the third year of Rājanārāyaṇa Śamburāya (i.e., A.D. 1340) gift of a lamp.

179 *of* 1894.—(Tamil). On the south wall of the *prākāra*. A record of the Chōḷa king Kō-Rājakēsarivarman *alias* Kulōttuṅga-Chōḷadēva (I), dated in his forty-second year. Records that an inhabitant of Rājarājapuram made over 10 *kāśu* to temple authorities who purchased, with this some land for maintaining a *maṭha* of Naminandi Aḍigaḷ and one of the 63 devotees of Śiva). [*S.I.I.*, III, No. 75, pp. 164–8. Also *Ins. S. Dts.*, p. 169, No. 6 and *Ind. Antq.*, Vol. XXI, p. 281-ff.]

*South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. iii, pages 167-168.

'In the forty-second year (*of the reign*) of . . . . . the emperor Śrî-Kulôttuṅga-Śôḷadêva, who *etc.*—we, the great assembly of Vâṇavaṉ-mahâdêvi-chatur-vêdimaṅgalam

in Kumiḻi-nâḍu, (*a subdivision*) of Âmûr-kôṭṭam, (*a district*) of Jayaṅgoṇḍa-Śôḷa-maṇḍalam, (*drew up*) a written deed of sale of land. We sold the following land, for maintaining a *Maṭha*, to Âdidâsa [Chaṇḍêśvara] dêva in the temple of Tirukkaḻukkuṉṟam-uḍaiya-Mahâdêvar, the lord of Ulagaḷanda-Śôḷapuram, *alias* Śembiyaṉ-Tirukkaḻuk-kuṉṟam, in [Kaḷattûr]-nâḍu, (*a sub-division*) of Kaḷattûr-[kôṭṭam].

The land sold (*at*) [Kî] raippâkkam, a western hamlet of our village, has to be reclaimed by cutting down . . . . . the jungle and removing the stumps.

The eastern boundary of (*this land*) adjoins the boundary of Uraḍagam; the southern boundary adjoins the boundary of Tâḻaivêḍu; the western boundary adjoins the boundary of U [ra] gamb [âkka] m; and the northern boundary adjoins the boundary of [Ta] ṇḍuṟai.

Having freed from taxes the wet land and the dry land, the trees above and the wells below, [enclosed within these four boundaries], and sold (*it*) for maintaining the *Maṭha* of Naminandi-Aḍigaḷ, which is situated in the *Maḍaiviḷâgam* of this village, we received as price ten good *kâśu* current at the time.

Having sold . . . and having received the money in full, we, the great assembly, made and gave a deed of sale. Having agreed that we alone should be bound to pay the small taxes, the big taxes and any other (*tax*) due on this land, we sold (*it*) free from taxes. By order of [Karâ] mbichcheṭṭu [Sarv] âdittaṉ, who belonged (?) to the *sabhâ*, we, . . . Bhaṭṭaṉ, Ma [ḷa] ppirâṉ Kumârasâmî-Kramavittaṉ, Aruḷâḷa-Bhaṭṭaṉ of Uṟupputtûr, Śrîraṅga-nâtha-Bhaṭṭaṉ of Paśumbuṟam, Śaṁkaranârâyaṇa-Bhaṭṭaṉ of Uṟupputtûr, Tillaikkûtta-Kramavittaṉ of Kura [va] ś [ê] ri, and Dôṉaśûra-Kramavittaṉ of Kirâñji,—all these members of the great assembly made and gave (*this*) writing [on stone, to last as long as] the moon and the sun.

This is the writing of Vâṇavaṉmahâdêvi-Uḍaiyâṉ Śelvaṉ Kuḷaiñâṉ. This charity was made by me, Dêvandai-nâdaṉ Aruḷâḷaṉ, *alias* Kulôttuṅga-Śôḷa-Mâpodiyarâyaṉ, of Râjarâjapuram in Eyiṟkôṭṭam. This charity . . .'

180 *of* 1894.—(Tamil). On the same wall. Records in the twenty-third year of the Chōḷa king Kō-Rājakēsarivarman *alias* Kulōttuṅga-Chōḷadēva a copy of a former copper-plate recording the *boundaries of Tirukkaḻukkunṟam.* [This inscription is given in *Ins. S. Dts.*, p. 170, No. 8, but the year is given as 33.]

181 *of* 1894.—(Tamil). On the same wall. Kō-Perunjiṅgadēva records in his twenty-first year, gift of a lamp. [See *Ep. Ind.*, VII, 165. The date corresponded, according to Kielhorn, to Saturday, the 10th February, A.D. 1274].

182 *of* 1894.—(Tamil). On the same wall. A record of Tribhuvanavīradēva (i.e., Kulōttuṅga III, 1178-1216) in his thirty-seventh year relating gift of a lamp.

183 *of* 1894.—(Tamil). On the west wall of the same *prākāra.* An incomplete record of the Chōḷa king Kō-Parakēsarivarman *alias* Rājadhirājadēva (II ?), dated in his ninth year. Records gift of a lamp.

184 *of* 1894.—(Tamil). On the same wall. Gift of land by Kōnērinmaikoṇḍān in his thirty-fourth year, for *repairs of the temple.*

185 *of* 1894.—(Tamil). On the inside of the east wall of the third *prākāra* of the same temple, right of entrance. A damaged record of Kampaṇa-Uḍaiyār (II ?), son of Vīra (Bukka I ?), dated Ānanda. [This is evidently Inscription No. 22, in *Ins., S. Dts.*, p. 174, No. 22. It says that the property of the deity stolen by a man was restored at the expense of his own, worth 750 *paṇams.*]

186 *of* 1894.—(Tamil). On the west wall of the Tripurasundari shrine in the same temple. Records in the ninth year of the Pāṇḍya king Kō-Jaṭāvarman *alias* Sundara-Pāṇḍyadēva (I, 1251-64), gift of a lamp. [See *Ep. Ind.*, VI, 307, where Kielhorn points out that the exact date is Sunday, 15th June A.D. 1259. See *Ins., S. Dts.*, p. 173, No. 19, where the regnal year is misread as I.]

187 *of* 1894.—(Tamil). On the same wall. Records in the ninth year of the Pāṇḍya king Kō-Jaṭāvarman *alias* Sundara-Pāṇḍyadēva (1251–64) gift of gold. *Ind. Antq.*, XXI, 343. [See the Srīraṅgam and Tiruppukkuḻi inscriptions;

*Ind. Antq.* XXII, p. 221; and *Ep. Ind.*, VI, p. 307, where Kielhorn gives the date as Tuesday, 29th April 1259. See also *Ins.*, *S. Dts.*, p. 173, No. 20].

188 *of* 1894.—(Tamil). On both sides of the entrance into the second *prākāra* of the same temple. Records in the ninth year of the Pāṇḍya king Sundara Pāṇḍyadēva the setting up of a liṅga by a chief of Aḍigai and gift of 67½ *paṇams*. [See *Ins.*, *S. Dts.*, p. 174, No. 21, where this inscription is given.]

189 *of* 1894.—(Tamil). On the south wall of the Bhaktavatsala temple. A much damaged record of the Pāṇḍya king Sundara Pāṇḍya.

57 *of* 1909.—(Tamil). On the north wall of the kitchen in the Bhaktavatsalēśvara temple, left of entrance. The Vijayanagara king Vīrapratāpa Bukkarāya II records in Ś. 1328, Vyaya, gift of land for repairs and for the festival called *Bukkarāyaṉ-śandi* (named after the king), to the temple of Tirukkaḻukkunṟamuḍaiya Nāyinār. [See *Ins.*, *S. Dts.*, p. 171, No. 10].

58 *of* 1909.—(Tamil). In the same place. Dated in the reign of the Vijayanagara king Pratāpa Bukkarāya (II). Records in Ś. 1328, Vyaya, gift of land to the temple of Tirumalai Āḷuḍaiya Nāyanar, by the people of Āyiravēlippaṟṟu. [See *Ins.*, *S. Dts.*, p. 171, No. 11, where this inscription is given.]

59 *of* 1909.—(Tamil). In the same place. A damaged record of the Pāṇḍya king Jaṭāvarman *alias* Tribhuvanachakravartin Vīra-Pāṇḍyadēva, dated thirteenth year. Records gift of a village for the festival called *Kāḷiṅgarāyan-śandi* to the same temple by the inhabitants of Kaḷattūrpaṟṟu. Tirukkaḻukkunṟam was a village in Kaḷattūrkōṭṭam in Jayaṅgoṇḍachōḷa-maṇḍalam. Mentions Kappalūr *alias* Ulagaḷandaśōḻanallūr in Muttūrukkūṟṟam in Pāṇḍi-maṇḍalam. [The king came to the throne in 1253 and so the year of the inscription was A.D. 1266. I have traced this inscription in the Mack. MSS. See *Ins.*, *S. Dts.*, p 172, No. 13.]

60 *of* 1909.—(Tamil). In the same place. A damaged record of the Vijayanagara king Vīrapratāpa Dēvarāya, dated

in Ś. 1320, Paridhāvi.' [This inscription is given in the Mack. MSS. It is said to record the grant of Vaṅgalappākkam to Tirukkaḻukkunṟa Nāyanār. [See *Ins.*, *S. Dts.*, p. 171, No. 12.]

61 *of* 1909.—(Tamil). On the same wall, right of entrance. Records in the tenth year of Sakalalōkachakravartin Rājanārāyaṇa Śambuvarāya (i.e., A.D. 1347) gift of land, by purchase, to the temple of Tirukkaḻukkunṟamuḍaiya-Nāyanār. Mentions Puduppaṭṭiṇam *alias* Śōḻamārttāṇḍanallūr in Mondūr-nāḍu, a subdivision of Āmūrkōṭṭam, a district of Jayaṅgoṇḍachōḷa-maṇḍalam. [See *Ins.*, *S. Dts.*, p. 172, No. 16. It says that the village was worth 350 *paṇams*.]

62 *of* 1909.—(Tamil). In the same place. Records in the seventh year of the Pāṇḍya king Māravarman *alias* Tribhuvanachakravartin Vikrama-Pāṇḍyadēva gift of cows for a lamp to the shrine of Shaṇmukha-Piḷḷaiyār by a native of Vānavanmādēvichaturvēdimaṅgalam in Āmūrkōṭṭam. [Is this king identical with that Māravarman Vikrama Pāṇḍya who came to the throne in 1282 and who was the victor over Viragaṇḍa Gōpāla and Gaṇapati of the Kākatīya dynasty ?]

63 *of* 1909.—(Tamil). In the same place. Records in the reign of the Vijayanagara king Vīra-Vijaya-Bhūpatirāya (Bukka III), in Vijaya, gift of taxes for a festival by Nāgēśvaramuḍaiyān Villavarāyan who was the agent of the king. [See *Ins.*, *S. Dts.*, p. 172, No. 14].

64 *of* 1909.—(Tamil). In the same place. Records in the reign of the Vijayanagara king Bhūpatirāya, in Ś. 1330, gift of 32 cows for a lamp by a native of Nerkulam, at the rate of ¼ measure of ghee daily for a lamp. [See *Ins.*, *S. Dts.*, p. 172, No. 15 also. Bhūpati was son of Bukka II].

65 *of* 1909.—(Tamil). At the top of the second pillar from the right in the upper verandah of the Orukāl maṇṭapa, on the hill. A damaged record. Mentions Kaḷattūr Kōṭṭam, Mūlatānāṭṭu Perumānaḍigaḷ and Vātāpikoṇḍa Naraśiṅgapōttaraśa (i.e., Narasimhavaram I, the conqueror of Vātāpi).

66 *to* 73 *of* 1909.—(English). On the eight pillars of the

upper and lower verandah in the same maṇṭapa. Records in seventeenth century A.D. signatures of Dutch officers.

74 *of* 1909.—(English). On the walls of the same maṇṭapa. Records in seventeenth century A.D. signatures of Dutch officers.

75 *of* 1909.—(English). At the entrance into one of the temple kitchens on the same hill. Records signatures of Dutch officers of the nineteenth century.

329 (*a*) *to* (*m*) *of* 1911.—(Roman characters). On the wall at the entrance into the birds' kitchen, on the hill. The following names (read tentatively) are engraved :—(*a*) A.D. Kiergr $\frac{1}{m}$ $\frac{1}{d}$ 1666; (*b*) C. J. Keys, Price, . . . Gyfford; (*c*) . . . H. C. Rabel, 89 Alack, L. Gray, . . . . Anne; (*d*) H. Dubon 1749; (*e*) . . . vkerck; (*f*) T. Campic . . . ; (*g*) D. V. A. S.; (*h*) J. A. Van Braam Nederld Commisss XX Febry MDCCCXIII, C/40 I. S. Peelman; (*i*) N. D. Jong Heere 1749; (*j*) 85 T. Poughion, 35; (*k*) P. E. Van Hogendrop, A. Vandenbroek; (See Cotton's *Tombs*, p. 187, No. 1006). A.M.E., L. Brachi-1793, M. Dormx, Wed. L. Aag . . . C. W. Cantervisscher 179 . . . ; (*l*) W. Van Somesen . . . ; P. St. Paul, C. J. Kevsersg, 1750, C. P. Keller; (*m*) Lucas, L. Hemsinck . . . $\frac{8}{m}$ $\frac{13}{d}$ 1662. [The last was either the chief at Sadraspatam from A.D. 1665 to 1686 or an engineer of that name who died in 1661. See *Ep. Rep.*, 1912, p. 92, for details.]

330 *of* 1911.—(Roman characters). On the wall of the temple kitchen on the same hill. Perhaps damaged at the right end. Registers the names :—W. Silves, H. Stee. . . 5.

331 *of* 1911.—(Roman characters). On the west wall of a ruined maṇṭapa in the north main street of the same village. "Geo: Dawson lived in this Choy. Fm. 18 October to 9 December 1769." Dawson was a Madras civilian. Entered the Company's service in 1751. Member of Madras Council, 1768. Chief of Cuddalore, 1769. Returned to England, 1776. See *Ep. Rep.*, 1912, p. 92.

On the south wall of the gate in the temple of Bhaktavatsalasvāmi. Records that one Toṇḍamāna Rāyan purchased the village "Echencaurana" for 250 golden *paṇams*

and granted it to the God in Vibhava. *Ins., Ced. Dts.*, p. 158, No. 1.

In the same place. Records that one Nārāyaṇadēva and another gave in the reign of Virupaṇṇa Uḍaiyār the village of Vampaṭṭu (?) for 1,360 *paṇams*. *Ibid.*, No. 2.

On the south wall of the gate of Bhaktavatsala temple. Records that in the same reign, in Vibhava, 53 *vēlis* of land in a village were sold for 1,560 *paṇams*. *Ibid.*, No. 3.

In the same place. Records that Vīra Kampaṇa Uḍaiyār levied on the local weavers a tax of 70 *paṇams* per annum, to be paid to the deity. *Ibid.*, No. 4.

In the same place. Records that in the reign of Vīra Bukkaṇa-Uḍaiyār, in Naḷa, certain allowances were made to the deity. *Ibid.*, No. 5.

On the southern surrounding wall. Records that Tillai-mūvāyiranambi and his brother Rāmabhaṭṭa purchased four *patakam* of land for 100 *kāśus* and granted it to the God Tirukkaḷukkunṟa Nāyanār in the twenty-fifth year of Kulōt-tuṅgachōḷa. *Ibid.*, No. 7.

In the same place in the same wall. Records that in the same year of the same king one Kanakarāya granted 90 sheep for ghee at the rate of ¼ measure daily. *Ins., Ced. Dts.*, p. 158, No. 9.

On the eastern wall of the gate of the kitchen in the Bhaktavatsala shrine. Records in the reign of Dēvarāya the sale of 3¾ *karai* of land at Kottappākkam for 820 *paṇams* and its endowment to the deity. *Ibid.*, p. 173, No. 17.

On the northern *prākāra* wall. Records that Tiruveṇkāṭṭu-Uḍaiyān granted 550 *kuḷis* of land to the deity in the twenty-first year of Tribhuvanavīradēva (Kulōttuṅga III). *Ibid.*, p. 173, No. 18.

On a stone in the tank of Śaṅkha-tīrtham. Records that Kulōttuṅga-Chōḷadēva granted in his third year 32 *vēlis* of land in the village of Kulōttuṅgachōḷa-Nellōre. *Ibid.*, p. 175, No. 23.

In the *prākāra* of the pagoda on the top of the hill. Records that a certain chief erected the maṇṭapam in front of the Vēdagirīsvāmi temple. *Ibid.*, p. 175, No. 24.

On the south wall of the inner temple. Records the presentation of a jewel to the God by a private person. *Ibid.*, p. 176, No. 25.

On a gate step of the Vināyaka temple in the southern wall of Vēdagirīśvara temple. Records that one Sūryadēva of Pūvinūr village erected the steps to ascend the hill and the pagoda of Vināyaka. *Ibid.*, p. 176, No. 26.

On the western wall of the maṇṭapam of the Amman shrine. Records the gift of the village of Amaranputtūr for the *Āvaṇi festival* by the inhabitants of a village to God Ādichandrēśvaraṇ. *Ibid.*, p. 177, No. 27."

# APPENDIX B

**Manikkavachakar, has sung as follows about the lord on the hill here and the following is the translation extracted from Pope's** *Tiruvasagam* :—

I

" O peaceful Perun-turrai's mighty Lord !
To those whose talk is of Thy thousand names
One even stream of matchless pleasure flows
My Lord, who once didst wipe away sore griefs,
When good and evil deeds were balanced,—
(for aftermath of ill no living seed),—
In sacred glories countless didst Thou come,
And show Thyself upon the Eagle's Hill.

II

Thou who for hire of cakes didst carry earth !
Thou madman great, of the *great haven's* shrine !
While I, who knew no law of right, to Thee,
Through ignorant delusion drew not near,
O Best of Beings, Lord of Siva-world,
Me, lower than the meanest cur, a man
Of evils sore, Thou can'st to make Thine own,
And show'dst, Thyself upon the Eagle's Hill.

III

In wilderment I strayed from Perun-turrai far,
Where tears were changed to joy, and foulness purged,
By sinful deeds to ruin brought, henceforth
I sinner knew not what should after grow,
Reft of the home where Thy bright feet once stood,
A prey to dire perplexity, I dwelt.
To save me from confusion sore Thou cam'st,
And show'dst Thyself upon the Eagle's Hill.

. ..ight wear
. ..gh, and daily praise,—
. awe of reverence,—the shame
.. knows no shame,—Sinking amid the sea.
Of Perun-turrai, dear beyond compare,
The glorious-ship I seized and climbed thereon ;
Straight way, in splendour no eye sees, Thou can'st,
And showd'st Thyself upon the Eagle's Hill.

V

In gloriours form displayed, Thou teeming cloud,
Of perfect good, in Perun-turrai seen !
Of matchless Gem, who puttest Thyself within
The thought of me, who naught of virtue knew !
The world itself shall witness bear that I
Desired Thee eagerly, and then Thou cam'st,
That when I called Thee, then Thou cam'st—
And shou'dst Thyself upon the Eagle's Hill.

VI

Great flood of Perun-turrai's shrine, Thou didst
The love that knows no change bestow ;
When foes with many an impious speech stood round,
What didst Thou unto me before them all ?
Thy Foot shall be my only refuge still,
From every death, and every various ill,—
And, therefore, when in love I called, Thou cam'st,
And show'dst Thyself upon the Eagle's Hill.

VII

O Isan, who the four and sixty demons mad'st
To share the eightfold qualities divine,—
When I had sunk in evil deeds,—the fruit
Of triple foulness that confusion brings,—
Thou didst the bands of clinging sorrow loose ;
Mad'st me Thine own ; gav'st me Thy feet's pure flower
In presence of Thy servant-band did'st come
And show Thyself upon the Eagle's Hill,"

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